

2013 ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUMMARY

PROTECTING AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

The mission of Columbus Public Health is to “protect health and improve lives,” and the department performs a variety of functions to fulfill this mission. The work that Columbus Public Health performs in guarding against threats to our natural environment is an important responsibility. Our natural environment plays an important role in creating a place where people want to live, work and play. More importantly, the health of our natural environment can have a direct impact on our personal health.

Environmental protection initiatives can reduce energy use and the production of pollution, improve our air and water quality, and promote physical activity – all of which can help reduce the levels of sickness and chronic health conditions in our community.

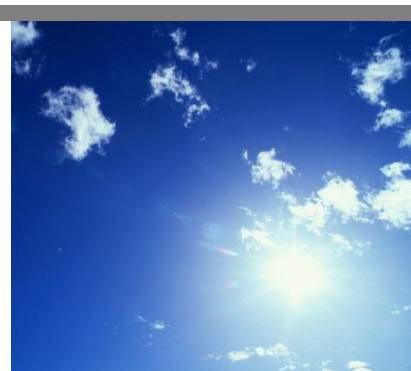
Each year, Columbus Public Health identifies a series of programming initiatives that can help protect and improve our environment. These initiatives are submitted to the City’s Office of the Environmental Steward. Together – with initiatives from other departments – these actions represent commitments by the City to reduce our impact on the environment.

The following provides information on Columbus Public Health’s environmental commitments since 2011. Initiative descriptions, community partners (if applicable) and specific commitments are detailed. Status information on current-year progress is collected twice a year.

CATEGORY: AIR QUALITY

Air Alert Action Plan

Description: Columbus Public Health attempts to provide advance notice to all City employees when air quality alerts for ozone / particulate pollution are forecast for Central Ohio. This notification is attempted during weekday operations so that department directors can implement procedures in the City’s Air Alert Action Day Plan that will protect employee health and help reduce ozone and particulates that may be created through City operations.



Project Partners: The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of applicable days where air quality forecast at unhealthy levels	6	12	1
Number of Air Quality Alert notices released by City to its employees	4	10	0
Percentage of applicable days where Citywide notification provided re: air quality alerts	66%	83%	0%

Healthy Homes

Description: The Healthy Homes Program works to reduce disease and injury by helping families to make their homes healthier and safer environments. Areas of focus include lead poisoning prevention, asthma and allergy control, and high risk indoor environmental concerns. The program provides a green cleaning kit and education to families with children that have asthma to reduce asthma symptoms and toxic chemical use in homes.

Project Partners: IMPACT, MORPC, NCH, Breathing Association, The Ohio State University College of Nursing, and Columbus Department of Development

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of families receiving "green" cleaning supplies	96	71	52
Percent of asthmatic children served through program with improved health conditions after 6 months	83%	80%	NA
Percent decrease in program children's hospitalizations	76%	50%	NA
Percent decrease in program children's emergency room visits	76%	83%	NA
Percent of children with Elevated Blood Lead (EBL) levels who show decreases in those levels after one and two-month case management follow-up	94%	100%	NA
Percent increase in ability of program's primary caregivers to I.D. asthma hazards in the home, identify asthma control methods and prevent home hazards to asthmatic children	80%	NA	NA
Percent increase in frequency and application of home hazard control and prevention practices by primary caregivers of asthmatic children	85%	NA	NA

Smoke Free Facilities

Description: The Creating Healthy Communities Program works to reduce the rate of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and cancer. The program does this by addressing a variety of risk factors for these diseases, including tobacco use. This year, the program is working with a "smoke-free facilities" initiative to develop and adopt a smoke-free policy for owners / managers of multi-unit housing complexes.

Project Partners: Owners or managers of private, multi-family housing complexes

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of policies or systems to support 100% smoke free housing in a Columbus area neighborhood	NA	2	36
Number of school districts or boards adopting a 100% Tobacco Free School policy	0	1	0

CATEGORY: LOCAL FOODS

Farmers Market

Description: Columbus Public Health hosts a Farmers Market each year to improve community nutrition by increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Improved nutrition reduces the risk for significant community health problems like diabetes and overweight and obesity. In addition, the event helps participating local growers economically by providing an additional sales outlet for their produce.

Project Partners: Market partners include USDA, which provides free produce coupons to clients enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program, and the Ohio State University College of Public Health, and Franklin County Medical Reserve Corps, which provide market funding and staff for the event.



Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of Market participants	7,664	5,691	5,889
Number of WIC produce coupons issued	4,501	3,831	3,824
WIC coupon redemption rate	NA	NA	90%
Number of ODC (food stamp) customers served	236	229	139
Total ODC sales	\$3,649	\$3,317	\$1,965
Average number of farmers participating	17	17	17

Fresh Produce in Pantries

Description: The Creating Healthy Communities Program works to reduce the rate of chronic diseases by addressing a variety of risk factors for these diseases, such as nutrition. According to the Mid-Ohio Foodbank, there were approximately 812,283 requests to Franklin County food pantries in 2011. The Creating Healthy Communities Program and Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens are working with community gardens and food pantries to provide fresh produce to those who need it most. More specifically, community gardens will donate fresh produce to food pantries in the Hilltop, Franklinton, and Linden neighborhoods. The food pantries will then give the produce to community residents. The Creating Healthy Communities and Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens staff also hope to show the amount of produce donated. Therefore, staff provided scales to the community garden partners. The community gardener partners agreed to weigh the produce donated.

Project Partners: Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens; Gardens: Franklinton Gardens, Westside Boys and Girls Club, Bible-Way Skip Garden I, Vines of Life, Highland Youth Garden, Christian Assembly Church, Linden Garden Association, Howard Recreation Center Pantry Partners: Baptist Tabernacle Church, New Salem Missionary Baptist Church, Christian Assembly Church, Hilltop Methodist Pantry, Westside Freestore, Bible-Way Church of Lord Jesus Christ, Holy Family Church, Gladden Food Pantry

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of community gardens donating to food pantries:	NA	NA	7
Number of community gardens weighing produce donated by food pantries:	NA	NA	7
Number of food pantries/soup kitchens providing fresh produce to clients:	NA	NA	7

Columbus Area Food Access Committee

Description: The Columbus Area Food Access Committee is a collaboration of community partners brought together by Columbus Public Health to create a local food access plan. The plan would outline strategies to increase access to healthy and nutritious foods in areas of the community that may lack these types of food sources. Committee members are considering food access strategies for various settings, including retail outlets; public and private worksites; community locations; and federal, state and local government nutrition assistance programs.

Project Partners: United Way of Central Ohio, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Mid-Ohio Food Bank, Local Matters, Greener Grocer, Children's Hunger Alliance, Greater Columbus Growing Coalition, Franklin Park Conservatory

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of food access strategies developed	11	5	NA
Baseline data collected on strategies by:	2012	In progress	NA
Completion of food access plan by:	2012	2012	NA

Community Gardens

Description: The Institute for Active Living (IAL) was created in 2008 to partner with Columbus Public Health programs and other community organizations to reduce and prevent chronic diseases such as obesity. The IAL works to increase access to physical activity and nutritious foods. The Institute's focus areas include development and enhancement of community gardens as a means to improve community nutrition local food systems. The department's Creating Healthy Communities Program also works in the area of community nutrition by developing population-based strategies – including development of community gardens – to help increase access to healthy foods and reduce chronic disease rates.

Project Partners: Franklin Park Conservatory

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of community gardens assisted with allocated grant dollars	35	35	34
Amount in grant dollars allocated to community partners for garden assistance	\$35,000	\$100,000	\$55,000
Number of strategies implemented to support sustainability of area community gardens	3	2	1

Food Mapping

Description: This Columbus Public Health project maps areas of the city where it may be more difficult for residents to find fresh fruits and vegetables. Access to healthy foods is important, because poor nutrition is related to poor health, and some communities (often low-income) face barriers in obtaining healthy food. People in these communities may have limited transportation options, or depend on small corner stores which may offer limited choices, more expensive or poorer quality food. Knowing where these locations are can help in developing more effective, coordinated interventions by identifying where new initiatives are needed most.

Project Partners: Franklin County Local Food Council

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Updated Columbus map showing areas of concern related to food access	completed	NA	completed
New map features identifying community initiatives addressing food access issues in or around areas of concern	completed	NA	completed

CATEGORY: WATER QUALITY

Drinking Water Supplies

Description: Private on-site drinking water systems (wells) are permitted and inspected annually by Columbus Public Health's Environmental Health Division. In addition, the division takes water samples upon request to evaluate for bacteria and nitrate only.

Project Partners: N/A



Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of new private drinking water well permits issued	3	4	4
Total number of private drinking water well inspections	17	27	11
Number drinking water well samples taken for bacteria / nitrates	17	25	9

Septic System Licensing

Description: Columbus Public Health permits and inspects household sewage treatment systems through its Environmental Health division. Aeration sewage treatment systems are inspected annually to insure they are working correctly. Traditional on-site sewage disposal systems are also inspected if they fail or if a complaint is received concerning their operation. The division also inspects household sewage treatment systems upon for real estate transactions.

Project Partners: N/A

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of septic system permits issued	6	5	2
Total number of on-site sewage disposal systems permitted and inspected	395	375	360

CATEGORY: ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Walking and Biking

Description: Columbus Public Health's Healthy Places program works with the built environment to provide opportunity for increased physical activity as a part of everyday life. One program focus area is improving health by promoting walking as an alternative means of transportation. The program does this through review of re-zoning requests for possible inclusion of active living features that make it easier and safer for pedestrians to be physically active. The program also works with interested residents to complete walk audits to assess conditions of neighborhood walk routes. Finally, the program produces walking maps, which identify safe and enjoyable walking routes of various distances in selected neighborhoods. This idea has been expanded to include Columbus Art Walks, an initiative that combines a defined walking route with a self-guided audio tour (accessible via cell phone or podcast) on various artistic, architectural, and historical points of interest.

Project Partners: Art Walks: Greater Columbus Arts Council, Columbus Landmarks Foundation, University District Organization, Campus Partners for Community Urban Redevelopment, The Ohio State University Libraries, Institute for Active Living, Short North Business Association, Short North Foundation, Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District, German Village Society, Franklinton Development



Association, Arts Foundation of Olde Town, and the Clintonville Historical Society. Green Walks: Mayor's Green Team, Columbus Green Spot, Columbus Recreation & Parks Department. City Wellness Walks: Healthy Columbus Program

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of Art Walk maps created	6	4	1
Number neighborhood walking maps created	16	4	5
Number of walk audits completed	4	5	5
Percent of rezoning requests submitted with Healthy Places recommendation(s) implemented	38%	40%	18%

Walking & Biking

Description: The Institute for Active Living develops partnerships with Columbus Public Health programs and other community organizations to prevent and reduce chronic diseases such as obesity by increasing access to physical activity and nutritious foods. Institute focus areas include raising awareness of bicycling as a fun, physical activity and promoting bicycle safety. This includes helping to organize the Bike Columbus Festival, which raises community funds for furthering active-living related issues such as bicycling, and coordinating the Mayor's Neighborhood Pride Community Rides that occurring annually in each Pride neighborhood.

Project Partners: Community partners include organizations such as the following: Consider Biking, Trek, Bike Source, Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, American Electric Power, Westerville Bike Club, area commissions, block watches and civic associations.

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Number of "Bike Columbus Twilight" paid riders	NA	600	830
Funds raised for "Bike Columbus" event	\$22,000	\$15,000	15,581
Number of riders participating in "Neighborhood Pride" events	30 per	120	NA
Number of "Bike Columbus" riders	1,100	NA	NA

CATEGORY: OFFICE RECYCLING

Recycling

Description: The Columbus Public Health's recycling program has been offered to employees as an easy and convenient way for them to make a positive contribution toward the environment, public health, and our economy. The program gives employees the opportunity to recycle a variety of recyclable materials, including paper, cardboard, glass, aluminum and steel.

Project Partners: Keep Columbus Beautiful, Rumpke, Royal Document Destruction



Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
Total pounds of material recycled by Columbus Public Health	52,324	50,573	102,152

Climate Change

Description: Climate change and its impact on the environment is an emerging public health issue. However, there does not seem to be a general understanding among the public about the link between this issue and public health, and the public level of concern regarding climate change appears to be low. This project will consist of two primary initiatives: 1) development of a “white paper” detailing the environmental and health impacts from climate change, and 2) research into how this public health issue (and possibly others) could be communicated in a different way to better educate the public and raise the level of public concern.

Project Partners: Ohio State University College of Public Health, Ohio State University School of Natural Resources

Department Commitments:	2011	2012	2013
White Paper detailing climate change impacts and link to public health	NA	Completed	NA
Message research results re: increasing public concern for environmental issues	NA	2013	In progress